

REMARKS

Upon entry of the present amendment claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11-14, 17 and 20 will remain pending. Claims 5, 10, 15, 16, 18 and 19 will be cancelled. Entry of the present amendment, reconsideration of the rejection and allowance of the pending application in view of the following remarks are respectfully requested.

In the Final Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 5, 10, 15, 16, 18 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Minde et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,991,717) in view of Ozawa (U.S. Patent No. 5,963,896), and allowed claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11-14, 17 and 20.

Upon entry of the present amendment, claims 5, 10, 15, 16, 18 and 19 will be canceled, leaving allowed claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11-14, 17 and 20 pending. Applicants will have cancelled the above-identified claims merely to advance the present application to issue, and thus cancellation of the claims should not be viewed as acquiescence to the propriety of the rejection.

Based on the above, it is respectfully submitted that this application is now in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Applicants recognize that the current status of the present application is after-Final. However, Applicants respectfully submit that entry of the present amendment is proper in the current circumstances. Applicants submit that no new issues are raised by the present amendment, as the present amendment merely cancels claims.

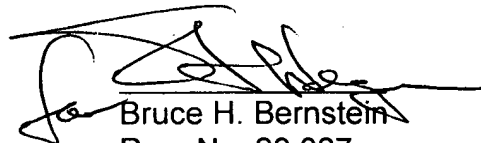
Entry and consideration of the present amendment, reconsideration of the outstanding Office Action, and allowance of the present application and all of the claims therein are respectfully requested and now believed to be appropriate. Applicants have made a sincere effort to place the present invention in condition for allowance and believe that they have now done so.

Any amendments to the claims which have been made in this amendment, and which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

Should an extension of time be necessary to maintain the pendency of this application, including any extensions of time required to place the application in condition for allowance by an Examiner's Amendment, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fee to Deposit Account No. 19-0089.

Should the Examiner have any questions or comments regarding this response, or the present application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully Submitted,
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December 19, 2005
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